



# Branson Briefs

A monthly e-Newsletter for the community providing information about upcoming activities, projects and events in the city of Branson

Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2010



City of Branson  
110 W. Maddux  
Branson, MO 65616  
417-334-3345  
417-334-6095 fax  
[www.bransonmo.gov](http://www.bransonmo.gov)

## Hours

8-a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

## Mayor

Raeanne Presley

## Board of Aldermen

Cris Bohinc  
Rick Davis  
Bob Simmons  
Rick Todd  
Sandra Williams

## City Administrator

Dean Kruithof

## Board of Aldermen meeting schedule

2nd & 4th Tuesday  
of each month  
7 p.m.  
Council Chambers  
City Hall



## Mike Booth appointed to Board of Aldermen

Branson banker Mike Booth has been appointed to the Branson Board of Aldermen representing Ward 1. He replaces Stan Barker who resigned in November because he moved out of the city. Booth will serve until the April 6, 2010 Municipal Election when that Ward 1 term expires.

A lifetime resident of Taney County, Booth is currently a senior vice president of lending at Ozark Mountain Bank. He has served 12 years on the Branson School Board, six of those years as president.

## Filing period ends January 19

The filing period for Branson citizens interested in running for a Board of Aldermen position continues through January 19. Four aldermen seats are up for election in the April 6, 2010 Municipal Election. One seat each in Wards 2 and 3 and two seats in Ward 1. You can sign up as a candidate at the Branson City Clerk's Office in City Hall, 110 W. Maddux.

An alderman must be at least 21 years old, a U.S. citizen, and live in the ward from which they are elected. Furthermore, all candidates for city elected offices are required to be up to date on municipal taxes and fees.

## Reception for retiring public works director

A reception will be held on **January 6, 2010, at 3 p.m. in the Branson Convention Center, Fall Creek Room**, for longtime Branson Public Works Director Larry VanGilder.

This will be a time to celebrate and show appreciation to Larry for his dedication and accomplishments in serving the citizens of Branson since 1976.

After 33 years with the city's public works department and serving 26 of those years as director, Larry is retiring effective January 8, 2010.

Larry headed the largest department in the city with 68 employees, and was the longest-serving public works director in the city's history.



## City adds another warning siren

A new storm siren has been installed at the Branson High School on Buchanan Road. The siren increases the city's total outdoor warning network to 20. Another new siren is ready for installation in the Branson Hills Parkway area behind Walmart as soon as Empire Electric is available to set the pole.

**City offices will be closed January 18 in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

**For the latest information on H1N1 (Swine Flu), click here, [www.taneycohealth.org](http://www.taneycohealth.org), that will take you to the Taney County Health Department Website.**



## *It's lawmen versus firemen*

Come out and support your local police and fire departments as police officers take on the firefighters for the first annual Guns 'n Hoses Basketball game on Saturday, January 16, 4:30 p.m. at the Branson Junior High School Gymnasium.

There's no entry fee, but donations will be accepted to benefit the police and fire associations.



## *Transportation update*

The developer of the Branson Hills shopping center will pay to have installed a traffic signal at the southbound exit off U.S. 65 with right and left turn lanes, according to Branson Engineer David Miller. That will ease congestion that backs up due to the Walmart Supercenter, Home Depot, Target and other retailers in Branson Hills.

Bids may be taken in January 2011 for revamping the intersection at U.S. 65 and Mo. 248, also according to Miller. MoDOT is considering a diverging diamond intersection, he said.

## *Taneycomo Bridge work underway*

Here's a look at the project schedule:

- ◆ Build a new Lake Taneycomo Bridge connecting Route 76 to Branson Landing Boulevard. This part of the project begins this month and will be completed by late 2010
- ◆ Rehabilitate and widen the existing Lake Taneycomo Bridge. This part of the project will begin in late 2010 after the new bridge is open to traffic and should be completed by December 31, 2011.
- ◆ Build an oval roundabout on the Hollister side of Lake Taneycomo to replace the current traffic signal and
- ◆ connect the bridges with Route 76/Business 65. Work has already started with completion by the end of the project in late 2011.
- ◆ Traffic on Route 76/Business 65 could be stopped several times a day for blasting operations. Times and dates will be announced later. Traffic could be stopped for up to 10 minutes before and during a blast.
- ◆ Nighttime one-lane traffic on Route 76/Business 65 on the east side of the bridge is possible. Few daytime lane closings are expected.
- ◆ Once the new bridge is completed in late 2010, Route 76/Business 65 traffic will be shifted to the new bridge and the existing bridge will be closed for rehabilitation.

## *Sales tax revenues slide in fourth quarter*

The city's one percent sales tax dropped 8.5% in the period October through December compared to the same period in 2008 — \$2,814,574 collected in '08 compared to \$2,575,503 in '09. The tourism tax for the two months of October and November was also down 8.5% — \$2,506,663 in '08 and \$2,293,925 in '09. December tourism tax not received yet.

## *More first-timers coming to Branson*

In its quarterly report to the Board of Aldermen, the Branson Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and CVB reports that through September 2009, visitation was down 3% or about 165,000 visitors compared to 2008. However, the visitors we are seeing are more often first-timers (32% vs. 23%), are spending more (\$958 per party compared to \$891 in 2008) and staying longer (4.51 days compared to 4.28). Branson also experienced a 3.4% increase in visitors coming from the primary markets, which are those 100-300 miles away.

## *2010 convention center budget gets okay*

Aldermen approved a Resolution accepting the 2010 convention center operating and capital budget. According to Bill Tirone of Hilton, which manages the convention center for the city, anticipated revenues in 2010 are about \$4.5 million. Expenditures are expected to be \$5.7 million leaving a deficit of almost \$1.2 million that the city will have to cover. However, the \$1.2 million loss is \$300,000 less than the city had budgeted.

## *Bench made from recycled material.*

City of Branson employee Sharon Green is pictured with a sign she created for this park bench made from recycled plastics. The sign reads "I am made from 100% recycled materials such as scrap tires, milk jugs and plastics."

The bench is located downtown near the bus stop at the corner of Commercial and Atlantic, behind Dick's 5 & 10.

The Recycle Center on Compton Drive accepts plastics as well as aluminum and steel cans, cardboard and paper. The hours are 8 a.m. to noon Tuesday through Saturday and 4-6 p.m. on Thursdays.

## **Citizens' Service Request Line**

**If you need a question answered about the city, or need to report a problem or express a concern, contact the Citizens' Service Request line at 337-8502. The line is open 24/7 and the city will respond to your request within five working days.**

**You can also e-mail a request from the city of Branson website [www.bransonmo.gov](http://www.bransonmo.gov).**

**In 2008, the city received and responded to 179 citizen requests.**



## ***City leasing office space to DBMA***

The Downtown Branson Main Street Association (DBMA) is moving its offices to the old Great Southern Building at the southeast corner of College and Business 65 – property owned by the city. The DBMA will pay the city \$300 monthly in rent and pay for all the utilities.

DBMA offices were located at 119 West Pacific, but the move will mean cheaper rent payments for the association. City crews have installed new carpeting and assisted with landscaping the property.

The city has owned that property for several years, and it has been occupied by both private and public offices.



DBMA offices now located in this city-owned building at 112 West College

## ***New businesses opening in Branson***

The following businesses have received commercial construction permits from the Branson Planning and Development Department:

**Arby's - 1077 Branson Hills Parkway Suite A**  
**Options Pregnancy Clinic - 192 Expressway Lane**  
**Tijuana Willie's Fresh-Mex Grill—2001 Highway 248 Suite 1**



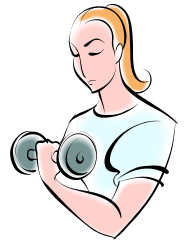
***RecPlex a cure for winter blues***

Two good reasons to get out to the Branson RecPlex this month — cure the wintertime cabin fever and shed those after holiday pounds. The RecPlex has a three lane walking/running track, and two full-size gymnasiums available for either basketball or volleyball during open gym hours. A daily pass is just \$1 per person and includes access to the track and gym. A one year pass is available for \$30 that allows unlimited visits.

Skaggs Health and Fitness Center on the upper level of the RecPlex provides fitness and wellness services with state-of-the-art fitness equipment for any workout level. Membership prices are available at the fitness center or call 417-348-0060.

The Branson RecPlex website is [www.bransonparksand recreation.com](http://www.bransonparksand recreation.com). The phone number

is 417-335-2368.



## ***Let it snow — public works is ready***



With the snow season upon us, the city's public works department is geared up and ready to tackle the white stuff to keep streets as clear as possible. Public works has 10 pieces of snow removal equipment including plows and dump trucks that are ready to hit the streets when snow depth reaches two inches.

The heavily traveled roads are plowed first, and then equipment begins moving along other streets. The priority roads include Epps, Roark Valley, Gretna, Shepherd of the Hills, Green Mountain Drive, Fall Creek and the major streets

leading into subdivisions and residential areas. Crews stay on these heavily traveled roads as long as it continues snowing. When it stops, crews go to other streets.

Highways 76, 248 and Business 65 south of Main Street are owned by the state and will be cleared by MoDOT highway crews.

## ***Businesses need to protect sprinkler systems***

With sub-freezing temperatures common for several days at a time during this winter season, the Branson Fire Department wants to remind area business owners, especially those that close in January and February, to turn on minimum heat to protect automatic fire sprinkler systems from freezing and causing costly water damage.

If a building is closed and heat turned off, a fire sprinkler system could freeze up and the pipes burst causing water damage.

Fire officials encourage property owners to inspect their attic areas to insure that there are no exposed pipes, and that all areas of the building are maintained at 45 to 50 degrees.

## ***Recycle your Christmas tree***

The Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery on south Missouri Highway 165 in Branson is once again accepting live Christmas trees for recycling. The trees will be used for erosion control and habitat enhancements in area lakes.

This service is free, but all decorations, tinsel, frosting, twine and plastic must be removed from trees.

Trees can be taken to a site near the boat ramp at the Hatchery and placed off of the parking lot surface. People should look for the green "Tree Recycling" signs directing them to the drop-off location.

